

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 5           1.     A method for managing a streaming media service, said method comprising:
- receiving a request for a streaming media service from a client, said streaming media service comprising a media service component;
- selecting a service location manager to which to provide said request from
- 10   a plurality of service location managers;
- selecting a service provider to which to assign said media service component from a plurality of service providers of a network; and
- informing said service provider of said assignment to perform said media service component, causing said service provider to prepare to perform said
- 15   streaming media service on streaming media.
2.     The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said selecting said service location manager comprises:
- maintaining a record comprising identifying information of a service
- 20   location manager among said plurality of service location managers; and
- selecting said service location manager according to said record.
3.     The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said selecting said service location manager comprises:

maintaining a record comprising a prioritized list of a set of available service location managers among said plurality of service location managers; and

5        selecting said service location manager according to the order of priority of said list of said record.

4.        The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said selecting said service location manager comprises:

10        maintaining a record comprising identifying information for a set of available service location managers among said plurality of service location managers; and

selecting said service location manager randomly from said record.

15        5.        The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said selecting said service location manager comprises:

maintaining a record comprising identifying information for a set of available service location managers among said plurality of service location managers; and

20        selecting said service location manager in a round robin manner from said record.

6.        The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said selecting said service location manager comprises:

maintaining a record comprising the processing load of each of a set of available service location managers among said plurality of service location managers; and

5        selecting said service location manager from said record having minimum processing load.

7.        The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said selecting is performed by a portal.

10        8.        The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said selecting said service location manager is based on the service location manager having the shortest pending request queue, lowest expected latency in servicing said request, or largest currently available communication bandwidth.

15        9.        The method as described in Claim 1; wherein said selecting said service location manager is based on a network condition.

10        10.        The method as described in Claim 9, wherein said network condition is associated with said client.

20        11.        The method as described in Claim 9, wherein said network condition is associated with a content source of said streaming media.

12.        The method as described in Claim 1, further comprising:

notifying a second service location manager among said plurality of service location managers of the assignment of said media service component.

13. The method as described in Claim 12, wherein said notifying  
5 performed by said service provider or said service location manager.

14. The method as described in Claim 12, wherein said second service location manager is a backup service location manager to said service location manager.

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15. The method as described in Claim 1, further comprising:  
maintaining a record comprising identifying information of a set of service location managers among said plurality of service location managers; and  
notifying said service location managers according to said record of said  
15 assignment to perform said media service component.

16. The method as described in Claim 15, wherein said maintaining and said notifying is performed by said service provider or said service location manager.

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17. The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said service location manager supervises said plurality of service providers.

18. The method as described in Claim 1, wherein said service provider is supervised by more than one service location manager among said plurality of service location managers.

5 19. A system for providing streaming content to a client device, said system comprising:

a plurality of service location managers;

a plurality of service providers, each service provider capable of performing a service on an item of streaming content; and

10 a portal providing a first point of contact for said client device, said portal for receiving from said client device a request for said service on an item of streaming content, said portal for selecting a service location manager to which to provide said request from said plurality of service location managers, said service location manager for receiving said request from said portal and for  
15 selecting a service provider from said plurality of service providers and informing said service provider of said assignment to perform said service.

20. The system of Claim 19, wherein said portal maintains a record comprising identifying information for said service location manager of said  
20 plurality of service location managers and selects said service location manager according to said record.

21. The system of Claim 19, wherein said portal maintains a record comprising a prioritized listing of available service location managers among

said plurality of service location managers and selects said service location manager in order of priority according to said list of said record.

22. The system of Claim 19, wherein said portal maintains a record  
5 comprising identifying information of a set of available service location managers among said plurality of service location managers and selects said service location manager randomly from said record.

23. The system of Claim 19, wherein said portal maintains a record  
10 comprising identifying information of a set of available service location managers among said plurality of service location managers and selects said service location manager in a round robin manner from said record.

24. The system of Claim 19, wherein said portal maintains a record  
15 comprising processing load of each of a set of available service location managers among said plurality of service location managers and selects said service location manager from said record having minimum processing load.

25. The system of Claim 19, wherein said service provider notifies a  
20 second service location manager among said plurality of service location managers of said assignment of said service.

26. The system of Claim 25, wherein said second service location manager is a backup service location manager to said service location manager.

27. The system of Claim 19, wherein said portal determines if a first service location manager of said plurality of service location managers is non-responsive.

5 28. The system of Claim 27, wherein said portal activates a second service location manager of said plurality of service location managers to perform the operation of said first service location manager, provided said portal determines said first service location manager is non-responsive.

10 29. The system of Claim 19, wherein said service provider is supervised by more than one service location manager of said plurality of service location managers.

15 30. The system of Claim 29, wherein said service provider maintains a record comprising identifying information of service location managers that supervise it.

20 31. The system of Claim 30, wherein said service provider notifies said service location managers that supervise it of said assignment.

25 32. The system of Claim 19, wherein said service provider is supervised by a first service location manager, said first service location manager transfers supervision of said service provider to a second service location manager.

33. The system of Claim 32, wherein said transfer is based on a processing load of said first service location manager.

34. The system of Claim 32, wherein said transfer is based on a processing load of a service provider supervised by said second service location manager.

35. The system of Claim 19, wherein said service location manager supervises said a service provider based on its location within a network.

36. The system of Claim 19, wherein said plurality of service location managers comprises a master service location manager that monitors the status of the other service location managers of said plurality of service location managers.

37. The system of Claim 19, wherein said service location manager receives a signal from said service provider after said service provider performs said service.